



For Immediate Release:

Oct. 11, 2016

Mumps outbreak in northwest Arkansas continues to grow

Mass vaccination clinic to be held October 13 in Springdale

Little Rock, Ark. – The northwest Arkansas Mumps outbreak continues to grow, with 492 individuals involved in the outbreak as of today. Cases have been seen in the Springdale, Rogers, Bentonville, and Huntsville school districts. The Arkansas Department of Health (ADH) is urging residents in these areas to make sure they and their loved ones are up-to-date on their Mumps, Measles, Rubella (MMR) vaccine and practice infection control by washing hands regularly and staying home if they suspect they are sick.

“We are very concerned about this outbreak,” said Dirk Haselow, MD, PhD, State Epidemiologist and Outbreak Response Medical Director for ADH. “Mumps can have serious complications. We are seeing transmission from child to child in school settings, and we continue to see a high number of new cases.”

The number of new cases, which had seemed to slow down recently, has begun to rise again. In response to this outbreak, ADH is offering MMR clinics in the northwest Arkansas community and schools. There will be a mass MMR vaccine clinic on October 13 at the Jones Center in Springdale from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. The flu vaccine will also be offered. Patients with insurance should bring their insurance cards. The vaccine will be provided at no cost to the patient whether they have insurance or not.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), mumps is a viral illness that is transmitted by direct contact with respiratory droplets or saliva from an infected person. It is best known for painful, swollen salivary glands that show up as puffy cheeks and swollen jaw. Boys may also have painful, swollen testicles. In some of these cases, fertility can be affected. Other symptoms include fever, headache, muscles aches, tiredness, and loss of appetite. There is no treatment, and symptoms usually resolve themselves within a few weeks. Mumps is usually a mild disease in children, but adults may have more serious disease with complications. Complications can include deafness and encephalitis. Encephalitis is inflammation of the brain.

The MMR vaccine is safe and effective. Two doses of MMR vaccine is 88 percent effective in preventing mumps. It is a live virus vaccine and is not recommended for pregnant women or patients with a weakened immune system. Adults born before 1957 are generally considered to be immune to mumps and do not need to receive the MMR vaccine.

The current CDC recommendations for MMR vaccination are as follows:

- For children younger than 6 years of age, one dose of MMR vaccine at age 12-15 months, followed by a second dose of MMR vaccine at age 4-6 years.
- For children age 7 through 18 years not previously vaccinated, one dose of MMR vaccine or MMRV (Mumps, Measles, Rubella, and Varicella) vaccine, followed by a second dose of either MMR vaccine or MMRV vaccine at least 4 weeks after the first dose.
- In outbreak situations, a third dose of the MMR vaccine may be safely recommended in certain settings where transmission has occurred, such as schools.
- For adults born in 1957 or later and not previously vaccinated, one dose of MMR vaccine.
- A second dose of MMR vaccine is recommended for adults born in 1957 or later, who are students in a post-secondary educational institution, work in a health care facility, or plan to travel internationally. The second dose should be administered a minimum of 28 days after the first dose.

MMR vaccines are available at the Local Health Unit in your county, and may also be available at your doctor's office or your local pharmacy.

For daily updates about the outbreak, more information about mumps and vaccination, or to find a Local Health Unit close to you, visit www.healthy.arkansas.gov.

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